

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Previously presented) A communication device for communicating messages over a network comprising:

at least one transceiver, configured to transmit and receive a message having a message identifier and a plurality of recipient identifiers wherein the plurality of recipient identifiers indicate an order of custody of the message by a plurality of different recipients, and wherein each of the plurality of different recipients are unable to edit said plurality of recipient identifiers and the order of custody of the message.

2. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, further comprising a memory, configured to store a message log associating a transmitted message with said message identifier and with said plurality of recipient identifiers.

3. (Previously presented) The communication device of claim 2, wherein:
said transceiver is further configured to receive, from a recipient amongst the plurality of different recipients, an update of said message log.

4. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to transmit and receive said message via a plurality of transport layer mechanisms.

5. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to encapsulate said message in accordance with a protocol such that said message may be transmitted and received using said protocol.

6. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to transmit a report to a message originator after transmitting said message wherein said message was previously received from said message originator.

7. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to transmit a report to a message originator after transmitting said message wherein said message was previously received from a message recipient.
8. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to receive, from a server, said message identifier and add said message identifier into said message prior to transmission of said message.
9. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to transmit a report to a server after transmitting said message wherein said message was previously received from said message originator.
10. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to transmit a report to a server after transmitting said message wherein said message was previously received from a message recipient.
11. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said transceiver is further configured to receive, from a server, an audit identifier and add said audit identifier into a message attachment prior to transmission of said message.
12. (Original) The communication device of claim 11, wherein said audit identifier uniquely corresponds to the combination of said message identifier, said order of said plurality of recipient identifiers, and a message originator identifier.
13. (Original) The communication device of claim 1, wherein said message comprises an encrypted message header that cannot be edited by recipients.

14. (Original) The communication device of claim 13, wherein said encrypted message header further comprises:

- a message identifier field;
- a message originator field; and
- a recipient identifier field for containing said plurality of recipient identifiers.

15. (Original) The communications device of claim 14, wherein said encrypted message header further comprises a message expiration field.

16. (Original) The communication device of claim 14, wherein said recipient identifier field further comprises a flag field for indicating a message originator preference setting.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Canceled)

19. (Canceled)

20. (currently amended) A server comprising:

a processor configured to assign and transmit an audit identifier to a message originator communications device via a network, said audit identifier for tracking resending or forwarding of said message, wherein said audit identifier uniquely corresponds to the combination of a message identifier, an order of recipient identifiers, and a message originator identifier, wherein the audit identifier is embedded into a message attachment; and

a memory configured to store a plurality of said audit identifiers wherein each of said audit identifiers is associated with a message attachment transmitted by said message originator communications device.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Original) The server of claim ~~20~~ wherein said audit identifier further comprises an identifier specific to said message attachment.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously presented) A method of tracking information custody comprising:
receiving a message by a first recipient electronic device, said message being sent from an originating electronic device;
re-transmitting said message by said first recipient electronic device to at least a second recipient electronic device; and
transmitting by said first recipient electronic device, a message log update, said message log update indicating that said message has been retransmitted to at least said second recipient electronic device.
25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24, wherein said message log update comprises a message identifier, a recipient identifier for said first recipient, and a second recipient identifier for said second recipient.
26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising:
transmitting said message log update to a server.
27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising:
transmitting said message log update to said originating electronic device.

28. (Previously presented) A method of constructing a message by a communications device comprising:

- generating a message identifier;
- adding said message identifier into a message header;
- adding a message originator identifier to said message header;
- adding at least one recipient identifier to said message header;
- receiving from a server an audit identifier, said audit-identifier useful for tracking resending or forwarding of a message attachment, wherein said audit identifier uniquely corresponds to the combination of a message identifier, an order of recipient identifiers, and a message originator identifier;
- embedding said audit identifier into said message attachment;
- encrypting said message attachment; and
- encrypting said message header.

29. (Canceled)